

Harriet S. Chapman, 89



Harriet "Happy" Stringer Chapman, died on Sept. 19. She lived out her closing days as she had lived her whole life: on her own terms. She took a long, last sail on Duxbury Bay, played some bridge and Scrabble, enjoyed her gardens and the company of her four children, Annie, Marnie, John and Emily. Happy, a fastidious writer, left some obituary-writing tips for her children, including to eschew the following adjectives: "avid," "beloved," "cherished" and "devoted". These she deemed trite and hackneyed.

"Just tell the story," she would say.

Happy was born and raised in St. Paul, Minn., attended the University of Colorado and eventually returned to St. Paul with her husband, Jack. Both taught school. An advantage of a teaching career is long summer vacations, and, beginning in 1960, the Chapman family began spending those months in a little summer cottage a stone's throw from Duxbury Bay. In 1985, after 25 joyous summers in the little cottage on Spring Street, Jack and Happy Chapman finally settled here year-round. Happy loved the intimacy of small-town life, walking across the mudflats for a swim in the channel and sharing the wonders of life by the sea with her children and grandchildren. She loved her Duxbury friends and Standish Shore neighbors and they loved her. She served for many years on the boards of the Standish Shore Association and the Pilgrim Museum, where she started a fund to support the museum's educational outreach.

Happy is survived by her four children: Anne Chapwell of London (Geraldine), Marnie Black of Cincinnati (Tim), John Chapman of Cleveland (Josie) and Emily Blodgett of St. Paul (Jeff); eight grandchildren: Mac Chapwell, Abby Narigon and Emily Favreau, Meg, Phil and George Chapman, Tim and Jack Blodgett, also by sister Anne DeCoster and brother Ed Stringer, both of St. Paul, and a raft of nephews and nephews.

Happy's friends and family will gather to remember her and celebrate her life at 4 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 24, at the Pilgrim Congregational Church in Duxbury. Memorials may be made to The Chapman Family Fund at the Pilgrim Museum or to the Cranberry Hospice.